

Frequently Asked Questions – Measure B – Urgent Medical Care

What exactly does Measure B do?

Measure B changes the wording of an existing tax measure and removes the restrictions on how taxes, collected by CLSD, can be used. By removing the words “after hours” from a tax measure passed in 1997, CLSD will re-allocate funds, already being collected through a parcel tax, so that they could be used for urgent care medical services at any time of day. **No tax increase is required.**

If Measure B is approved by the voters, what will CLSD do with these tax dollars?

It is anticipated that approximately \$150,000/year will be paid to RCMS to help support the Daytime Urgent Care Department at their Gualala facility. RCMS would continue to commit between \$150,000 and \$170,000 in fundraising to this service.

Why does RCMS need this support?

As with any on-call service, the Daytime Urgent Care Department at RCMS’ Gualala clinic is costly to run. Providing a medical team, experienced in emergency medicine, at the RCMS Gualala clinic, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. is expensive. RCMS is currently losing approximately \$300,000/year on this service. This is partly because reimbursement from Medicare, MediCal and other insurance only covers about 60 percent of the total cost. Plus, while patients often receive the same or similar medical care in the Gualala Urgent Care Department as in a hospital emergency room or urban urgent care clinic, RCMS cannot bill at the same (higher) rates as those other medical facilities.

We have lost After Hours Urgent Care in this community. Is it possible that Daytime Urgent Care at RCMS will also be discontinued?

Having access to urgent and emergency medical care is a high priority for area residents. And, this service has always been well supported financially by this community. For example, between April and December 2011, RCMS received over \$150,000 in donations to help support the Daytime Urgent Care Department at the Gualala health center. The management team and Board of Directors of RCMS are committed to continuing to provide urgent care services, if financially feasible. However, this service cannot be allowed to jeopardize the health center’s primary care services. With the approval of Measure B, tax dollars could be allocated to RCMS, reducing (but not eliminating) the health center’s dependence on fundraising, and the Daytime Urgent Care Department at RCMS could continue to provide this much-needed service to the community.

Are there plans to reinstate After Hours Urgent Care in our community?

A committee (the Community Healthcare Working Group, made up of members of the Boards of RCMS and CLSD) was formed over two years ago to look at the possibility of reinstating some level of 24-hour urgent care service for this community. Through the Community Healthcare Working Group, RCMS and CLSD have agreed to share the responsibility for developing short-

and long-term solutions to providing urgent/emergency medical services for our community. The proposal behind Measure B grew out of Community Healthcare Working Group meetings as one way to help keep daytime urgent care services available in the short-term. The Group continues to meet and pursue ideas that will support and expand urgent medical care coverage for us all.

To be able to provide a long-term solution to providing medical services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, RCMS and CLSD must work together. Removing the “after hours” restriction to the current tax measure is a step towards successful collaboration.